

**IN THE CLAIMS**

This is a complete and current listing of the claims, marked with status identifiers in parentheses. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A distance piece ~~(1)~~ comprising:

first and second parts ~~(2, 3)~~ having inner surfaces ~~(4, 5)~~ facing towards each other, and outer surfaces ~~(7, 8)~~ forming part of an outer surface of the distance piece, the parts being movable relative to each other between a contracted relative position with a shorter distance between the outer surfaces and an expanded relative position with a larger distance between the outer surfaces,

a separation part ~~(9)~~ located between the first and second parts, and being movable in a first direction between a first position relative to the first and second parts wherein the separation part forces the first and second parts towards the expanded relative position and a second position relative to the first and second parts wherein the first and second parts are allowed to move to the contracted relative position, and

locking means ~~(16)~~ for hindering movement of the separation part from the first position to the second position relative to the first and second parts,

~~characterised in that~~ wherein locking means comprises at least one configuration in which it permits movement of the separation part from the second position to the first position relative to the first and second parts.

2. (Previously Presented) A distance piece according to claim 1, wherein the locking means comprises a lock which is movable between a locked position wherein it hinders the movement of the separation part relative to the first and second parts and an unlocked

position wherein it does not influence the movement of the separation part relative to the first and second parts.

2. (Previously Presented) A distance piece according to claim 1, wherein the lock forms part of the separation part

3. (Currently Amended) A distance piece according to claim 2, wherein the separation part comprises a handle (17, 18) extending outside the space to effectuate the movement of the separation part from outside the space.

4. (Previously Presented) A distance piece according to claim 3, wherein the lock forms part of the handle to enable movement of the lock between the first and second position from outside the space.

5. (Currently Amended) A distance piece according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ 1, wherein the first and second parts are connected by an elastically deformable connection member (34) exerting on the first and second parts a force towards the contracted relative position.

6. (Currently Amended) A distance piece according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ 1, wherein at least one of the inner surfaces comprises a suspension groove (20, 31) forming a suspension for the separation part.

7. (Currently Amended) A distance piece according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ 1, wherein the lock comprises a locking surface portion (19, 30) of at least one of the first and second parts engaging a locking surface portion (16, 29) of the separation part.

8. (Previously Presented) A distance piece according to claim 7, wherein at least one of the locking surface portions comprises at least one protrusion.

9. (Previously Presented) A distance piece according to claim 8, wherein the at least

one protrusion forms part of an indented surface.

10. (Currently Amended) A distance piece according to claims 7-9, wherein the locking surface portion of the first and/or second part is located in a groove in the inner surface of that part.

11. (Previously Presented) A distance piece according to claim 10, wherein the groove forms an extension of the suspension groove.

12. (Currently Amended) A distance piece according to ~~any of~~ claims 7-11, wherein the separation part in addition to the locking surface portion comprises an unlocking surface portion being smooth relative to the locking surface portion.

13. (Previously Presented) A distance piece according to claim 12, wherein the locking surface portion of the separation part is in contact with the locking surface portion of the first and/or the second part in the locked position of the lock, and wherein the unlocking surface portion of the separation part is in contact with the locking surface portion of the first and/or the second part in the unlocked position of the lock.

14. (Previously Presented) A distance piece according to claim 13, wherein the locking surface portion of the separation part is adapted to rotate relative to the first and second parts between the locked position and the unlocked position.

15. (Currently Amended) A distance piece according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ 1, wherein at least one of the first part, the second part and the separation part is wedge shaped.

16. (Currently Amended) A distance piece according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ 1, wherein the outer surface of at least one of the first and second parts comprises at least one resilient protrusion ~~(15)~~.

17. (Currently Amended) A distance piece according to claim 16, wherein the resilient

protrusion is located in a cavity (23) of the surface.

18. (Currently Amended) A distance piece according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ 1, wherein the locking means comprises surface portions of the first and second parts which abut cooperating surface portions of the separation part, wherein the abutting surface portions form an angle,  $\alpha$ , with the first direction, and wherein a coefficient of friction,  $\rho$ , between abutting surfaces multiplied with sine to the angle  $\alpha$  is larger than cosine to the angle  $\alpha$ .